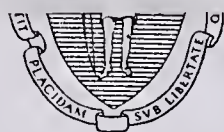




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The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

BOSTON, MA 02133

SPECIAL SUBCOMMITTEE ON FOSTER CARE: FACT SHEET ON CHILD ABUSE AND FOSTER CHILDREN.

- * In 1989, there were 70,713 children reported as abused and neglected - a 15% increase over 1988.
- * If trends continue, there will be 83,100 reports of child maltreatment in 1990, and nearly 100,000 by 1991.
- * In 1989, there were 22,532 children with substantiated or supported investigations of child maltreatment - a 19% increase over 1988.
- * The following chart represents the numbers of cases reported, screened in and supported, and the percent of screened in reports that are supported:

Year	#Reported	#Screened In	#Supported	%
1989	70,713	36,000 (appr.)	22,532	65%
1988	61,506	37,000	18,957	51
1987	52,391	36,409	17,356	48
1986	49,799	37,266	18,295	49
1985	49,465	35,971	18,111	50

- * Studies indicate that 90% of abusive acts against children take place in the child's own home; about 2.5% occur in public places or outside the home.
- * DSS proceeds with investigations on about 1,400 cases a month, after reports are screened in by social workers.
- * Mass. has higher child removal rates, and higher substantiation, or supported cases, of child abuse than the national average.

Average national substantiation rate = 42.7%

Average Mass. substantiation rate = 53.0%

- * Each year, DSS receives approximately 17,000 reports of physical abuse of children; 6,500 reports of child sexual abuse, and 29,000 reports of child neglect; substantiated cases for each category are, approximately, 7,000 physical abuse, 3,000 sexual abuse, and 11,000 neglect.

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 DIVISION OF SOCIAL SERVICES
 BOSTON, MASS.

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- * While DSS supported 22,532 cases of all categories of child maltreatment in 1989, only 1,904 of these cases were reported by DSS to the District Attorneys; only 10% of these cases, or 190 cases statewide, are cases of physical abuse to children. The remaining 1,714 cases are sexual abuse to children.
- * While DSS supports approximately 7,000 physical abuse of children each year, only approximately 190 cases of physical abuse are received by the District Attorneys, though physical abuse cases are mandated, in certain conditions, to be reported to District Attorneys. In only 8% of these cases are the perpetrators convicted.
- * The following chart states a breakdown of cases of child maltreatment in the process from reports to DSS to reports to D.A.'s to conviction.

Reports	Supported	Reported to D.A.'s	Prosecuted
70,000	22,500	1,900	152

Substance Use/Abuse and Children:

- * Estimates are that 5,000 drug-affected babies are born each year in Mass.; 353 children were born with opiate addictions and had supported investigations.
- * Substance abuse contributes to the abusive conditions in at least 64% of the cases seen in Massachusetts.
- * Multiple drug use is frequent in cases of child maltreatment in 89% of the cases studied, more than one family member was abusing drugs and/or alcohol.

Child Fatalities:

- * There was a 22% increase in all child deaths known to DSS from 1988 to 1989 - 68 in 1988 83 in 1989. The increase in infant deaths went from 24 in 1988 to 43 in 1989.
- * Of the 43 infant deaths in 1989 - 58% higher than in 1988 - 22 were preceded by drug and/or alcohol use during pregnancy. At least 4 others were probably preceded by substance abuse.
- * 17 of the 22 deaths involved cocaine.

CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE.

- * By December of 1989, due to increases in violence and substance abuse in families, 13,399 children could not live in their own homes, and had to be placed in substitute care - foster care and group homes.



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p. 3, Facts

- * In 1989, there were 11,666 children in out of home placements, and projections for the end of 1991 are that this number will reach 16,059 children in foster and group care.
- * The increased demand for foster homes of all types is burgeoning far beyond the actual current availability of foster homes, especially specialized care.
- * Children are entering foster care with AIDS, or AIDS-related infections, and with drug-addictions, or substance use/abuse-related problems, in increasing numbers.
- * There has been a 40% increase in the last 2-1/2 years in the number of children remanded to the legal custody of the state.
- * In June, 1987, 517 children under 2 were in foster care; in 1988, there were 688; and by June, 1989, a total of 893 children under two were living with foster families.

